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ABSTRACT

An overview of the 1988-89 pilot study and 1989-90 field test for the Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program is provided. Development of an annual evaluation program for media specialists began in 1987 with the formation of an advisory committee of media specialists, administrators, university personnel, and Georgia Education Department representatives. The committee developed drafts of evaluation instruments and suggested methods for assessing the practices included therein. The University of Georgia's Performance Assessment Laboratory subsequently received a contract for further program development. The program consists of the: (1) Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument, which is used to assess performance of effective media specialist practices grouped into four major tasks; and (2) the Georgia Media Specialist Duties and Responsibilities Instrument, which is designed to evaluate professional relations and adherence to state and local policies. Evaluators are either principals or assistant principals, who undergo a special training program. During the pilot study and field test, data were gathered via questionnaires, debriefings, monitoring, workshop and conference presentations, and recordkeeping forms. Numerous concerns of media specialists regarding the pilot study were addressed in the field test. Pilot study and field test editions of the two instruments are appended. (TJH)

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Pilot Study and Field Test Data and Experiences for the Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program

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Pilot Study and Field Test Data and Experiences for the Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program

The Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act, passed by the Georgia legislature in 1985, addresses a variety of concerns about public education in the state. One of the mandates of QBE is that all certified personnel will have their performance evalauted annually by a profiecient evaluator.

As a result of this legislative act, the Georgia Department of Education and its contractors have begun or completed development of annual evaluation programs for both certified and noncertified school personnel. Programs for evaluating instructional, leadership, and school service personnel include: (a) Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), (b) Georgia Leadership Evaluation Instrument (GLEI), (c) Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program (GMSEP), (d) Georgia School Counselor Evaluation Program (GSCEP), (e) Georgia School Psychologist Evaluation Program (GSPEP), (f) Georgia Speech and Language Pathologist Evaluation Program (GSLPEP), and Georgia School Social Worker Evaluation Program (GSSWEP). The GTEP was implemented throughout the state in the 1989-1990 school year, while the evaluation programs for leadership and school service personnel are in the field test stage.

This paper provides an overview of the pilot study and field test for the Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program. For additional information about annual evaluation programs for

school counselors and school psychologists in Georgia, see Newton (1990), Newton and Rogers (1990), Rogers (1990), and Safter (1990).

Initial Development of the GMSEP

Development of an annual evaluation program for media specialists began in 1987 with the formation of an advisory committee composed of media specialists, building level administrators, central office administrators, university personnel, and Georgia Department of Education representatives. The advisory committee developed the first drafts of the evaluation instruments and suggested methods for assessing the practices included therein. In 1988, the Performance Assessment Laboratory of the College of Education at the University of Georgia received a contract for further development of the annual evaluation program for media specialists. At that time, a project coordinator was hired to write evaluation manuals, to develop an evaluator training program, and to oversee other components of the evaluation program.

Content of the Evaluation Program for Media Specialists

The GMSEP consists of two components: the Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument (GMSEI) and the Georgia Media Specialist Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (GMSDRI). The GMSEI is used to assess performance of effective media specialist practices, which are grouped into four major tasks: (a) managing the school media program, (b) developing and maintaining the media collection, (c) providing services to facilitate the

instructional process, and (d) participating in professional development activities. Each of these tasks is divided into a number of dimensions, which are separated further into effective practices. The GMSDRI is used to examine professional relations and adherence to state and local policies. (See the appendix for pilot study and field test editions of the GMSEI and the GMSDRI.)

Evaluators for the GMSEP are either the building principal or assistant principal because an evaluator from outside of the individual school would have little or no knowledge about the school's instructional program, characteristics of the student population, employee interrelations, and other factors. Job performance of media specialists on the practices described in the GMSEI is assessed by four methods: (a) observations of the media specialist working with students and teachers, as well as observations of media center processes, (b) a review of typical media center documents, (c) a questionnaire concerning media specialist services completed by teachers and other staff members, and (d) an interview between the media specialist and the evaluator.

The GMSEP underwent a pilot study during the 1988-1989 school year and a field test during the 1989-1990 school year. The program will be implemented statewide on July 1, 1990.

Characteristics of Pilot Study and Field Test Sites

The pilot study for the GMSEP, an abbreviated process that lasted 10 weeks, took place in 28 schools throughout Georgia in the winter of 1989. The pilot study included schools from

different locations and of a variety of sizes. An unanticipated characteristic of the pilot study was that no high schools participated.

The field test commenced at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year and lasted through mid-March, 1990. For the field test, superintendents of all Georgia school districts were asked to name one or more building administrators to use the GMSEP. Of the 186 school systems in the state, 174 participated in the field test.

Training of Evaluators

The pilot study and the field test consisted of two major components: a training program for evaluators, and an assessment of the job performance of media specialists. During the pilot study, training for evaluators was conducted by the GMSEP project coordinator at two sites in the state. For the field test, the project coordinator trained a set of trainers composed of building administrators and persons with a media background, usually media specialists. These two-person teams then conducted sessions in which administrators were taught to use the GMSEP.

The training program consisted of four segments, each of which lasted approximately three hours. A variety of materials, including sample media center documents, evaluation records, and videotape vignettes, were used in these training programs. (See Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument evaluation manual, pilot study edition, 1989; Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program evaluation manual, field test edition, 1989; Georgia

Media Specialist Evaluation Program trainer's manual, field test edition, 1989; Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument training handouts, pilot study edition, 1989; and Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program training handouts, field test edition, 1989, for additional information.)

The first training segment included information about the role of the media specialist in the total school program. This training segment was an important component of the entire evaluation program because virtually all administrators in Georgia have been teachers, but few have been media specialists. As a result, evaluators usually did not understand the role of a media specialist as well as they understood the role of a teacher. During the first training segment, various Georgia Department of Education policies related to the evaluation of media specialists' job performance were discussed. In addition, a videotape addressing flexible media center scheduling was added for training in the field test.

The second training segment was composed of information about the content and structure of the evaluation instruments as well as opportunities to practice scoring sample documents. The third segment consisted of practice on scoring sample observation items and using the teacher questionnaire. The final segment included a practice scoring set about the performance of a fictional media specialist, a proficiency check that evaluators were required to pass to conduct evaluations, and directions for conducting a required orientation for media specialists to the

evaluation program. (See Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument orientation guide, pilot study edition, 1989 and Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Program orientation guide, field test edition, 1989.)

Data Gathering Activities

Data were gathered at a number of points during the pilot study and field test. Major methods used to obtain input from pilot study and field test participants were questionnaires, debriefings, monitoring, workshop and conference presentations, and recordkeeping forms.

Participants completed a variety of questionnaires that provided information for the use of program developers. One, during training sessions, evaluators completed questionnaires concerning demographic information, training procedures, training materials, and videotape vignettes. Two, media specialists completed demographic questionnaires and questionnaires about the procedures and content of the orientation to the evaluation program. Three, both media specialists and evaluators provided feedback via mid-term and end-of-year questionnaires. (See Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument data analysis, 1989, for further information). Four, media specialists, participants in the field test, and selected others responded to content validation surveys concerning the practices in the instruments. (See Content validation, Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument, 1989 for further information.)

A second major data gathering activity included personal contacts with pilot study and field test participants via debriefings and monitoring. (See Rogers, 1990, for details about debriefings and monitoring in the pilot study and field test.) Debriefings consisted of sessions during which groups of evaluators and media specialists met separately with the project coordinator to voice their concerns about the evaluation program. In the pilot study, the project coordinator conducted four debriefings at various locations in the state to which all pilot study participants were invited. During the field test, two debriefings were conducted; evaluators and media specialists from approximately 50 schools were invited to attend.

Monitoring occurred when a staff member from the Performance Assessment Laboratory visited individual schools and met separately with the media specialist and the evaluator. No monitoring activities took place during the pilot study; however, approximately 20 schools were monitored during the field test.

A third method by which feedback from participants and others was obtained was presentations at workshops and conferences. First, the project coordinator spoke at Georgia Department of Education Regional Workshops for media specialists, which were attended by approximately three-fourths of the state's media specialists, during both the pilot study and field test years. Second, the program coordinator and personnel from the Georgia Department of Education discussed the evaluation program at meetings of state professional organizations. Third, the

project coordinator conducted workshops about the GMSEP for Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) and individual school districts.

A final technique for gathering feedback was analysis of recordkeeping forms used by evaluators. Evaluators returned Observation Records, Documentation Records, Questionnaire Records, Interview Records, and Annual Evaluation Summary Reports to the Performance Assessment Laboratory for analysis and review.

Concerns of Participants

Several areas of concern from participants became evident during the pilot study and field test. Many of these concerns came out of the pilot study and were addressed in the field test. Other areas currently are being considered in the revision of the evaluation program as it is prepared for implementation in all schools in 1990-1991.

The concerns of media specialists stem from a perception that administrators and teachers do not understand proper role expectations for media professionals. Media specialists as a group have stated that principals have an incomplete, and sometimes inaccurate, perception of appropriate tasks for media specialists. Consequently, media specialists believe that this lack of understanding may have an adverse effect on the outcomes of the evaluation program. For example, use of flexible schedules in media centers is a requirement of both the Georgia Department of Education and the GMSEP. However, some media specialists have stated that their principals hamper

implementation of flexible scheduling and that this circumstance, which is beyond the control of media specialists, may be reflected in the outcomes of the evaluation. During the field test, this concern was addressed in the first segment of the evaluator training program, in which flexible scheduling was discussed and a videotape about this technique shown.

A second concern of media specialists deals with cooperative planning with teachers. The GMSEP states that media specialists must plan with teachers for the instruction of information access skills. Many media specialists feel that neither teachers nor administrators understand the concept and use of cooperative planning and that this lack of perception may have an adverse effect on the evaluation of media specialists. To address this concern, beginning in 1990-1991, a videotape about cooperative planning will be shown to administrators during their training. In addition, the Georgia Department of Education currently is producing a videotape for teachers about cooperative planning.

A third area of concern for media specialists is the use of a staff questionnaire. Many media specialists object to teachers' having input on the GMSEP, particularly when media specialists do not have a similar opportunity in the teachers' evaluation program. This area was addressed in the field test by including explicit directions for evaluators for administration and analysis of questionnaires. In the implementation year, use of the questionnaire will be optional.

A final major difficulty for media specialists involves observation of instruction of groups of students. In the pilot study, evaluators were given little guidance for conducting observations of media specialists' teaching of groups. Most evaluators from the pilot study requested more structured directions for this area. Consequently, in the field test, evaluators were directed to use general techniques from the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) when observing large group instruction in media centers. Media specialists objected to the use of GTEP procedures because, first, media specialists usually are not familiar with the GTEP, and, second, media specialists primarily fill a service role rather than an instructional role. In the implementation year, evaluators will be directed to observe media specialists involved in a group instructional activity that has been planned cooperatively with a teacher. The instruction should exhibit a focus, appropriate presentation of content, appropriate responses to students, and closure.

The primary concern of evaluators relates not to the GMSEP as such, but to evaluation responsibilities in general. As a result of the QBE Act, building level administrators in Georgia must attend training for and implement evaluation programs for teachers, media specialists, counselors, speech and language pathologists, and administrators for whom they have supervisory responsibility. Evaluators stated that they spend an overly large amount of time conducting evaluations, completing

accompanying paperwork, and communicating evaluation results to practitioners. This concern will be addressed in the implementation year by combining the documentation check and interview into a single process, and by streamlining evaluation procedures and recordkeeping.

The annual evaluation program for media specialists in Georgia will be implemented statewide on July 1, 1990. In the 1990-1991 school year, all of media specialists in Georgia's public schools will be evaluated with the GMSEP. During the summer and fall of 1990, approximately 2000 principals and assistant principals will be trained by teams of media professionals and administrators to use the GMSEP.

Media specialists who receive unsatisfactory annual evaluations will be ineligible for a higher step on the state salary schedule. In addition to this purpose, however, use of the GMSEP should identify and reinforce effective media specialist practices and identify areas in which media specialist development can improve media services to students and teachers.

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Appendix A

Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument

Pilot Study Edition

Task I: Manages/Assists in Managing Media Program

Dimension A: Coordinates activities of building media committee

Effective Practices:

1. Ensures formation and necessary convening of school media committee

2. Seeks involvement/input from members of media committee

3. Informs media committee of needs assessment results/progress toward goals and provides professional expertise

4. Recommends media plan (including goals, objectives, activities, and budget priorities) based on identified needs

5. Recommends policies/procedures to media committee

Dimension B: Implements media plan as established with media committee

Effective Practices:

1. Informs users (students, school staff) of media policies and procedures

2. Conducts activities as specified in media plan

3. Evaluates activities to determine if objectives have been met

4. Revises activities as necessary

Dimension C: Manages media center staff, services, and facility

Effective Practices:

1. Instructs and supervises staff and volunteers in regard to duties and performance

2. Maintains a calendar (including effective scheduling system)

3. Maintains a workable, accurate circulation and retrieval system

4. Promotes accessibility to media resources/ equipment/facilities throughout the school day and school year

5. Maintains an attractive and functional (arrangement conducive to diverse activities) facility

6. Works toward automation of media management functions in order to minimize time required for routine activities and to ensure access to resources

Dimension D: Maintains accurate media center records

Effective Practices:

1. Maintain accurate catalog of resources

2. Maintains accurate, up-to-date shelf list

3. Maintains accurate equipment inventory consistent with local policy/procedures

4. Maintains accurate financial records consistent with media budget

Dimension E: Promotes media program

Effective Practices:

1. Informs users (students, parents, school staff) of resources and services

2. Informs faculty of media plan

3. Informs users of special media activities (e. g., book fair, media festival, bulletin board, open house)

Task II: Develops and Maintains Media Collection

Dimension A: Selects media materials and equipment based on identified needs of instructional program and individual users

Effective Practices:

1. Analyzes collection based on curriculum objectives

2. Selects media consistent with adopted selection policy and identified needs

3. Utilizes a variety of selection aids (e. g., Booklist, School Library Journal)

4. Seeks input/consults with school staff in regard to curricular and equipment needs (e. g., maintains a consideration file)

Dimension B: Coordinates acquisition, processing, and organizing of media resources

Effective Practices:

1. Orders media consistent with local policy/procedures

2. Ensures processing (inspection, stamping, labeling, etc.) of resources in a timely manner

3. Catalogs media according to accepted standards

4. Arranges media on shelves according to an accepted classification system

Dimension C: Maintains media collection

Effective Practices:

1. Ensures shelving/filing of media and equipment to maximize user access

2. Inspects/maintains media and equipment

3. Weeds collection of obsolete/irreparable media and equipment

Task III: Provides Services to Facilitate the Instructional Process

Dimension A: Provides and/or reinforces the instruction of information access skills

Effective Practices:

1. Plans with school staff to incorporate needed information access skills into instructional program

2. Assists teachers with information access skills instruction

3. Instructs students in use of library/media center

Dimension B: Serves as a resource to instructional staff and students

Effective Practices:

1. Assists users in selection, location, and use of media and equipment

2. Assists users in accessing other collections (referrals, networking, community resource file, etc.)

3. Provides information about and complies with copyright laws

4. Assembles materials for class topics (e. g., bibliographies) or class sets of materials

5. Plans with school staff to incorporate media resources into instructional design

6. Recommends media and technology based on needs of instructional program and class content

7. Serves as a resource for materials production

8. Conducts inservice activities as needed or requested

Task IV: Participates in Professional Development Activities

Dimension A: Seeks opportunities to increase professional skills/knowledge

Effective Practices:

1. Participates in continuing education (e. g., professional organizations, workshops/sessions at meetings/conventions, coursework, staff development)

2. Reviews current research and literature

Dimension B: Applies newly acquired professional knowledge

Effective Practices:

1. Integrates new skills/knowledge/equipment into media program

2. Instructs/informs users of new technologies and in use of new media/equipment as needed or requested

Appendix B

Georgia Media Specialist Duties and Responsibilities Instrument

Pilot Study Edition

A. Follows professional practices consistent with school and system policies in working with students, parents, and colleagues

1. Interacts in a professional manner with students, parents, and colleagues

2. Maintains confidentiality of circulation records

3. Works cooperatively with school administrators, special support personnel, colleagues, and parents

4. Models correct use of language, oral and written

5. Demonstrates accurate use and up-to-date knowledge of content

B. Complies with school, system, and state administrative regulations and board of education policies

1. Enforces regulations concerning student conduct and discipline

2. Is punctual

3. Provides adequate information and materials for substitute

4. Assists in implementing designed curriculum

5. Maintains accurate, complete, and appropriate records and files reports promptly

6. Attends and participates in faculty meetings and other assigned meetings and activities according to school policy

7. Complies with conditions as stated in contract

8. Complies with policies in regard to absences, home-school communication, parent conferences, etc.

C. Acts in a professional manner and assumes responsibility for the total school program, its safety and good order

1. Takes precautions to protect records, equipment, materials, and facilities

2. Assumes responsibility for supervising students in their care

Appendix C

Georgia Media Specialist Evaluation Instrument

Field Test Edition

Task I: Manages/Assists in Managing Media Program

Dimension A: Coordinates activities of building media committee

Effective Practices:

1. Ensures formation and necessary convening of school media committee

2. Seeks involvement/input from members of media committee

3. Informs media committee of needs assessment results/progress toward goals and provides professional expertise

4. Recommends media plan (including goals, objectives, activities, and budget priorities) based on identified needs

5. Recommends policies/procedures to media committee

Dimension B: Implements media plan as established with media committee

Effective Practices:

1. Informs users (students, school staff) of media policies and procedures

2. Conducts activities as specified in media plan

3. Evaluates activities to determine if objectives have been met

4. Revises activities as necessary

Dimension C: Manages media center staff, services, and facility

Effective Practices:

1. Instructs and supervises staff and volunteers in regard to duties and performance

2. Maintains a calendar (including effective scheduling system)

3. Maintains a workable, accurate circulation and retrieval system

4. Promotes accessibility to media resources/ equipment/facilities throughout the school day and school year

5. Maintains an attractive and functional (arrangement conducive to diverse activities) facility

6. Works toward automation of media management functions in order to minimize time required for routine activities and to ensure access to resources

Dimension D: Maintains accurate media center records

Effective Practices:

1. Maintains accurate catalog of resources

2. Maintains accurate, up-to-date shelf list

3. Maintains accurate equipment inventory consistent with local policy/procedures

4. Maintains accurate financial records consistent with the media budget

Dimension E: Promotes media program

Effective Practices:

1. Informs users (students, parents, school staff) of resources and services

2. Informs faculty of media plan

3. Informs users of special media activities (e. g., book fair, media festival, bulletin board, open house)

Task II: Develops and Maintains Media Collection

Dimension A: Selects media materials and equipment based on identified needs of instructional program and individual users

Effective Practices:

1. Analyzes collection based on curriculum objectives

2. Selects media consistent with adopted selection policy and identified needs

3. Utilizes a variety of selection aids (e. g., Booklist, School Library Journal)

4. Seeks input/consults with school staff in regard to curricular and equipment needs (e. g., maintains a consideration file)

Dimension B: Coordinates acquisition, processing, and organizing of media resources

Effective Practices:

1. Orders media consistent with local policy/procedures

2. Ensures processing (inspection, stamping, labeling, etc.) of resources in a timely manner

3. Catalogs media according to accepted standards

4. Arranges media on shelves according to an accepted classification system

Dimension C: Maintains media collection

Effective Practices:

1. Ensures shelving/filing of media and equipment to maximize user access

2. Inspects/maintains media and equipment

3. Weeds collection of obsolete/irreparable media and equipment

Task III: Provides Services to Facilitate the Instructional Process

Dimension A: Provides and/or reinforces the instruction of information access skills

Effective Practices:

1. Plans with school staff to incorporate needed information access skills into instructional program

2. Assists teachers with information access skills instruction

3. Instructs students in use of library/media center

Dimension B: Serves as a resource to instructional staff and students

Effective Practices:

1. Assists users in selection, location, and use of media and equipment

2. Assists users in accessing other collections (referrals, networking, community resource file, etc.)

3. Provides information about and complies with copyright laws

4. Assembles materials for class topics (e. g., bibliographies) or class sets of materials

5. Plans with school staff to incorporate media resources into instructional design

6. Recommends media and technology based on needs of instructional program and class content

7. Serves as a resource for materials production

8. Conducts inservice activities as needed or requested

Task IV: Participates in Professional Development Activities

Dimension A: Seeks opportunities to increase professional skills/knowledge

Effective Practices:

1. Participates in continuing education (e. g., professional organizations, workshops/sessions at meetings/conventions, coursework, staff development)

2. Reviews current research and literature

Dimension B: Applies newly acquired professional knowledge

Effective Practices:

1. Integrates new skills/knowledge/equipment into media program

2. Instructs/informs users of new technologies and in use of new media/equipment as needed or requested

Appendix D

Georgia Media Specialist Duties and Responsibilities Instrument

Field Test Edition

I. Media Specialist Duties and Responsibilities

A. Follows professional practices consistent with school and system policies in working with students, parents, and colleagues

1. Interacts in a professional manner with students, parents, and colleagues

2. Maintains confidentiality of circulation records from persons outside of the school or school system

3. Works cooperatively with school administrators, special support personnel, colleagues, and parents

4. Models correct use of language, oral and written

5. Demonstrates accurate and up-to-date knowledge of content

B. Complies with school, system, and state administrative regulations and board of education policies

1. Enforces regulations concerning student conduct and discipline

2. Is punctual

3. Provides adequate information and materials for substitute to operate the media center

4. Assists in implementing designed curriculum

5. Maintains accurate, complete, and appropriate records and files reports promptly

6. Attends and participates in faculty meetings and other assigned meetings and activities according to school policy

7. Complies with conditions as stated in contract

8. Complies with policies in regard to absences, home-school communication, parent conferences, etc.

C. Acts in a professional manner and assumes responsibility for the total school program, its safety and good order

1. Takes precautions to protect records, equipment, materials, and facilities

2. Assumes responsibility for supervising students in their care

II. Duties and responsibilities prescribed by local school and system (optional)

A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

III. Professional Development Plan (PDP)

In cases where a Professional Development Plan is required for specific needs development, the evaluator, the media specialist, or both will develop the PDP.